



BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!

JACK STAFF

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PAUL GRIST
PHIL ELLIOTT



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COMICS PRESENTS

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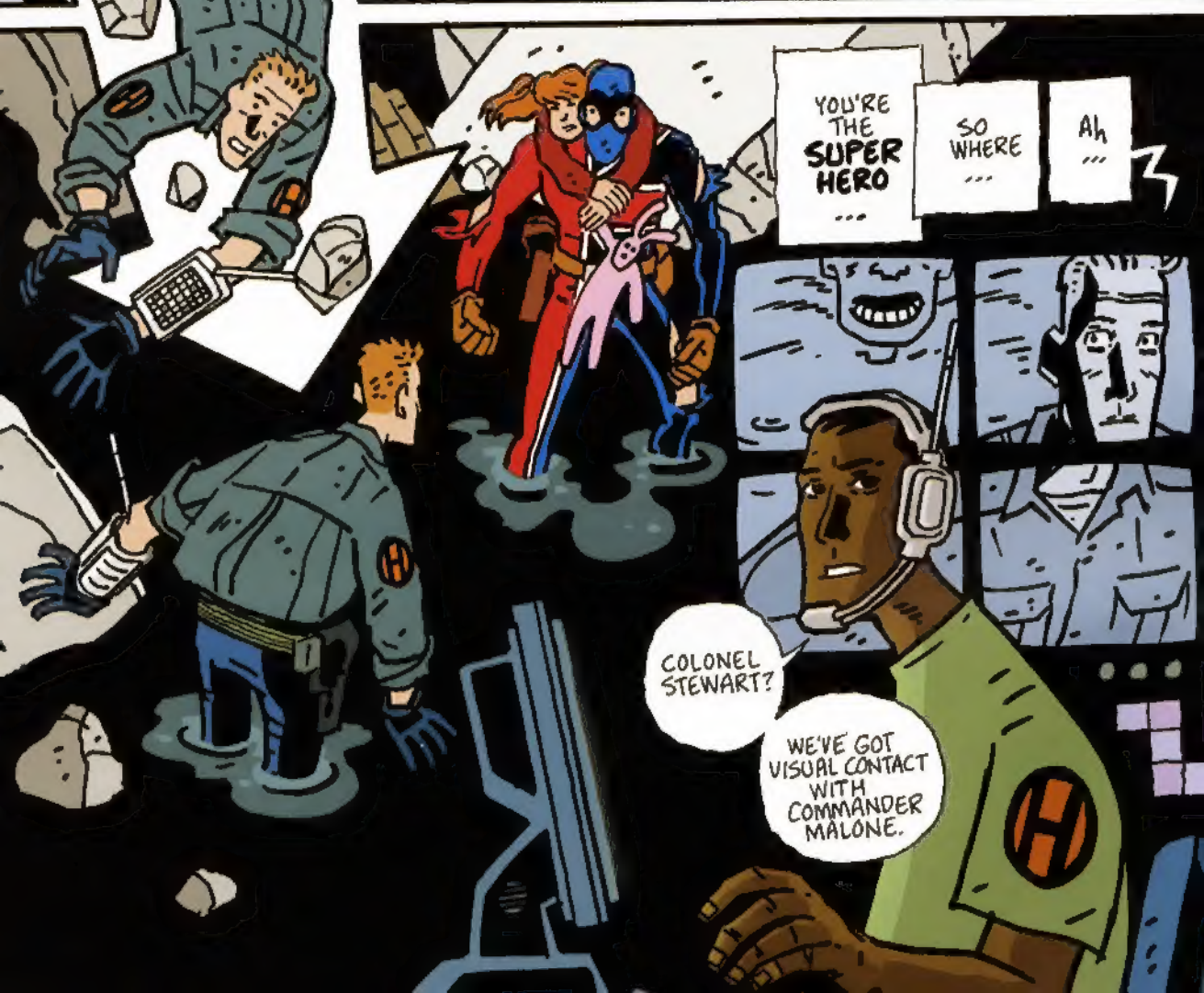
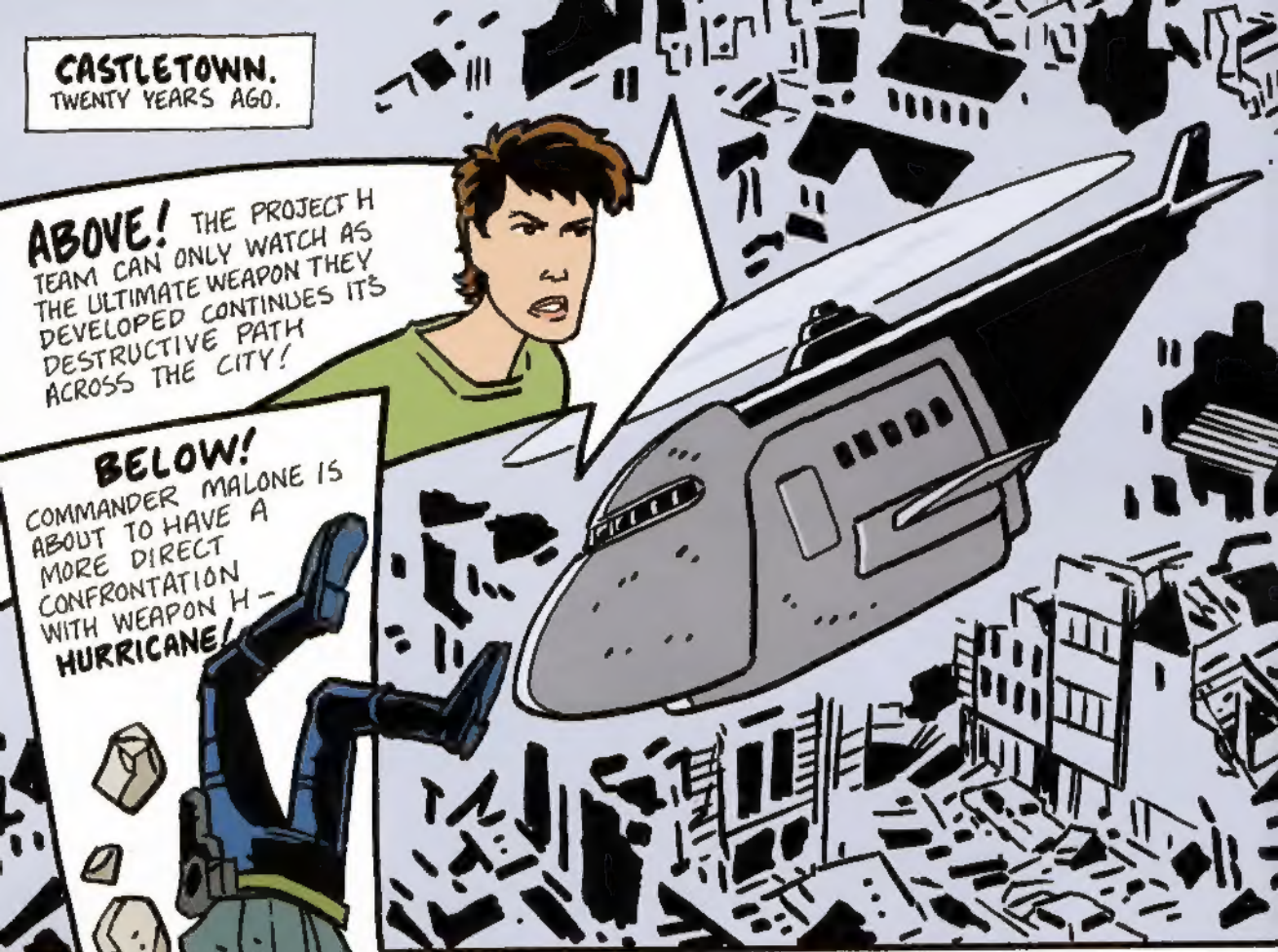
TWENTY YEARS AGO **JACK STAFF** WAS BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!

BUT THAT'S ALL GOING TO CHANGE IN THE NEXT TWELVE MINUTES

CASTLETOWN.
TWENTY YEARS AGO.

ABOVE! THE PROJECT H
TEAM CAN ONLY WATCH AS
THE ULTIMATE WEAPON THEY
DEVELOPED CONTINUES ITS
DESTRUCTIVE PATH
ACROSS THE CITY!

BELOW!
COMMANDER MALONE IS
ABOUT TO HAVE A
MORE DIRECT
CONFRONTATION
WITH WEAPON H-
HURRICANE!



YOU'RE
THE
SUPER
HERO
...

SO
WHERE
...

Ah
...

COLONEL
STEWART?

WE'VE GOT
VISUAL CONTACT
WITH
COMMANDER
MALONE.





BY THE
TIME I'VE
FINISHED
YOU WON'T
FEEL A
THING.



I
WARNED
MALONE
ABOUT
THIS!

HE WAS
PUSHING
HIM TOO
HARD



SEDATE
HIM.



BUT
COLONEL
STEWART
...

WITHOUT
THE BOY WE'LL
BE LEAVING
COMMANDER
MALONE ON
HIS OWN
DOWN THERE
...

THAT'S
NOT MY
CONCERN
RIGHT
NOW.



HAD
COMMANDER
MALONE READ
ANY OF MY REPORTS,
HE'D HAVE KNOWN
GENERAL TUBBS
CONTROLS HIS
LITTLE ARMY BY
**PSYCHO
KINESIS.**

THE ONLY
'DEVELOPMENT'
PROJECT H MADE
WAS TO GIVE
HIM A MORE
**VIOLENT SET
OF TOYS TO
PLAY WITH.**

THE
KEYBOARD
WAS JUST
SOMETHING
TO KEEP
HIS HANDS
BUSY.

"I EXPECT THE COMMANDER'LL
HAVE TO WORK THAT OUT HIMSELF."

SPLASH

YOU'RE
ON YOUR
OWN
NOW.

SIR.



RAARRRGH

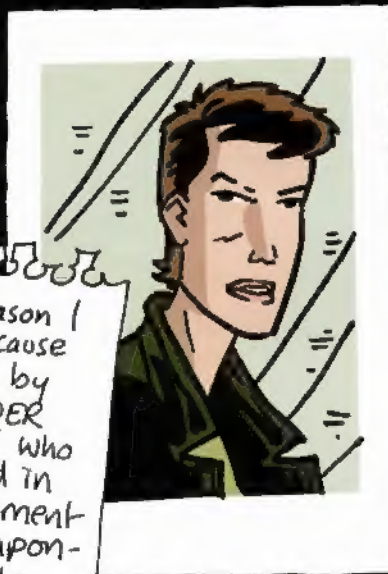
I have to write
all this down
because I'm
probably not
going to
remember any
thing in the
morning

I know it
sounds crazy
but it's true-
It's happened
before

Twenty years ago
the military
dropped a TOP
SECRET weapon
on Castletown.
Half the city
centre was
destroyed.

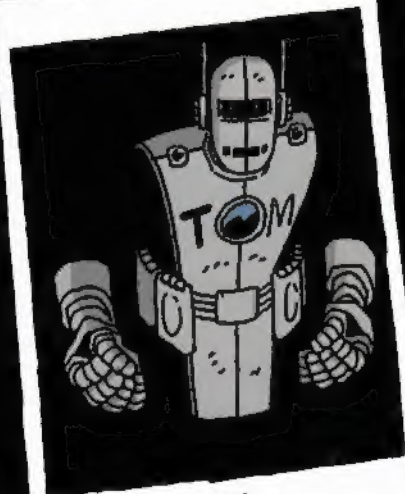
And NOBODY
remembers that!
They just told us
there'd been an
EARTHQUAKE -
and we believed
them.

The only reason I
know is because
I was told by
COMMANDER
STEWART who
was involved in
the development
of that weapon -
an unstoppable
soldier fuelled
by anger



After the Castle
town attack, the
soldier, HURRICANE,
was never found.
But twenty years
later, a tracker
signal brought
her back to
Castletown.





This all ties in with these RAGE ATTACKS that have happened in Castle town over the last few days. Even TOM TOM the ROBOT MAN seemed to have one!

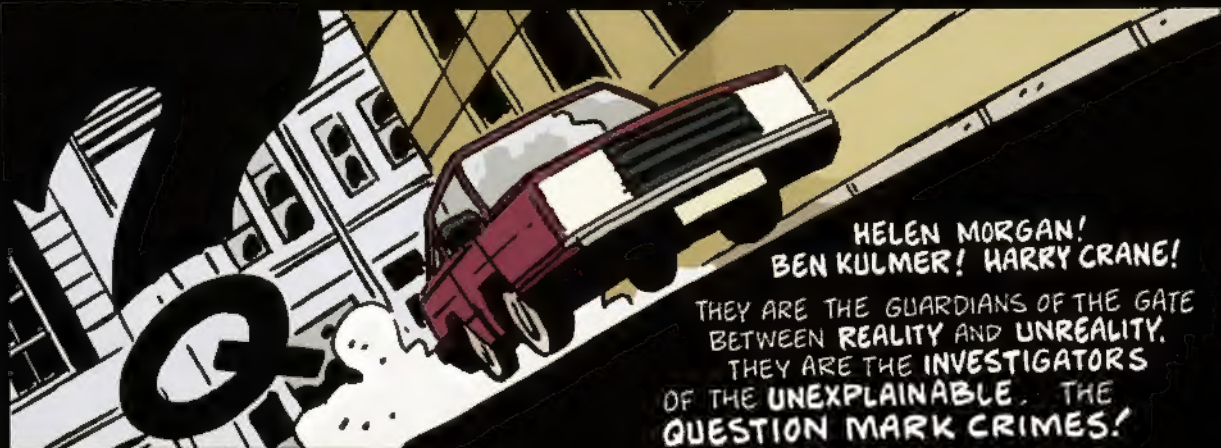
But last night - everything went CRAZY! It was like the whole town took to the Streets in a Violent Rage.

There was a man attacked in the riots - we brought him to the hospital but we couldn't identify him.

Commander Stewart thought he might have been the original Hurricane - but by the time she'd fought her way here - He was GONE!



But the RAGE was still there - only this time it was all in SHOCK - the Electric Powered Super villain!



HELEN MORGAN!
BEN KULMER! HARRY CRANE!

THEY ARE THE GUARDIANS OF THE GATE
BETWEEN REALITY AND UNREALITY.
THEY ARE THE INVESTIGATORS
OF THE UNEXPLAINABLE. THE
QUESTION MARK CRIMES!

MY NAME IS
HARRY CRANE.

I USED TO BE
A POLICEMAN.

THE DRUNK IN THE
PASSENGER SEAT IS
D.J. MAVERYK.

WE USED TO WORK
TOGETHER.

WE USED TO
BE FRIENDS.

ZNG

NOW I WORK
FOR Q.

WE'RE DRIVING
OUT TO **QUAKE**
CIRCLE.


IT WAS BUILT ABOUT TWENTY
YEARS AGO AFTER AN
EARTHQUAKE HIT THE AREA.

SNORGO

TO BE HONEST, IT'S JUST A
GLORIFIED ROUNDABOUT WITH
SOME OF THE RUBBLE FROM
THE EARTHQUAKE SET INTO
THE GROUND.

RIGHT NOW, IT SEEMS TO BE
THE **EPICENTRE** OF THE RAGE
ATTACKS THAT HAVE BROKEN
OUT ACROSS CASTLETOWN.





I'M SUPPOSED
TO BE MEETING
HELEN MORGAN
HERE. SHE HAS
A PLAN.

I DON'T THINK IT
INVOLVES THE
WELCOME COMMITTEE.



AT LEAST
I MANAGED
TO LOCK
THE CAR



DOOR.





I'VE BEEN IN RIOTS BEFORE.



THIS ISN'T LIKE THOSE.

THIS IS-- DIFF-
ERENT, SOME
KIND OF
COLLECTIVE.



THESE PEOPLE AREN'T
RIOTING--- THEY'RE
SWARMING.

THERE'S TOO MANY.

I CAN'T FIGHT A CITY.



NO - WE
HAVEN'T GOT
TIME FOR ALL
THIS NOW

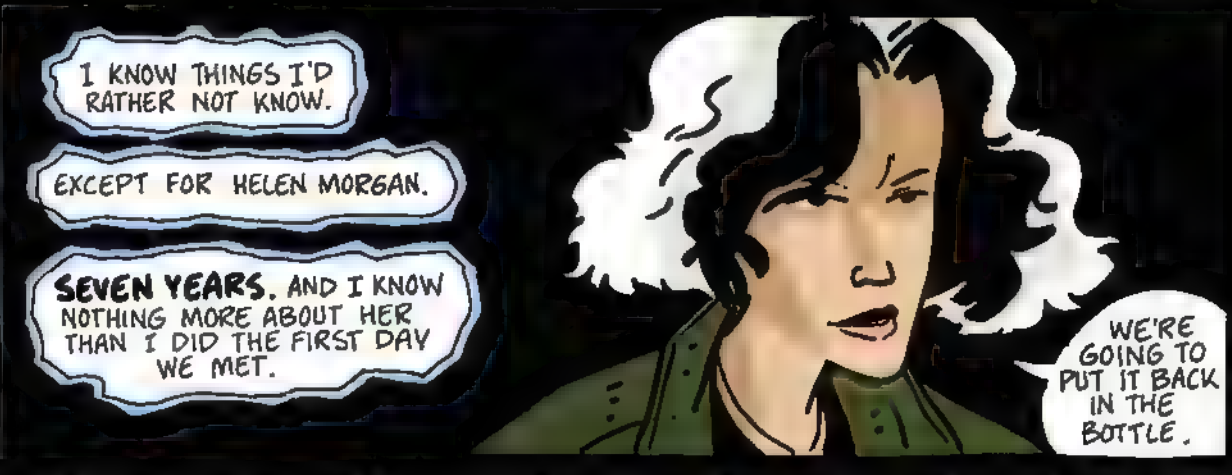
AND THEN THE
CAVALRY ARRIVES.

Nuh
--

THIS GUY'S
HEAVIER
THAN HE
LOOKS...

WHAT
YOU DOIN'
WITH
ME...

AND
THAT'S
SAYING
SOME
THING!





Commander Hawkes was the leader of UNIT D - a group set up in the 1960's to fight Super villains

He could see that SHOCK was angry - looking to lash out - so he tried to calm him down -



which, in retrospect, wasn't probably the best idea - this wasn't the same SHOCK Hawkes had come across the day before



By all accounts
SHOCK was more
of a MISCHIEF
MAKER than an
out and out
VILLAIN - but that
all changed -



HEY!
IT'S ME.
BECKY.

ARE
YOU
ALRIGHT?

Now he was
Vicious
Cruel
brutal
he had the
power - but
now he had
the RAGE

Girl Reporter
VICTIM OF VAMPIRE

THE WORLD'S
Press

JACK
STAFF

ON THE
STREET

When he zapped
JACK STAFF
there was this
smell in the air
- he wasn't just
trying to stop
STAFF - he was
BURNING HIM!



RAARGH!

WHAT IS
WRONG
WITH THIS
BLASTED
IDIOT
TOY?

YOU CAN
WORRY
ABOUT NEW
BATTERIES
LATER.

RIGHT
NOW, WE
NEED TO
GET **OUT**
OF HERE.

IT'S NOT
WORKING
...



IDIOT.



WOOAH!



HEY
YOU!
SUPER
HERO!

I
NEED
SOME
HELP
HERE!



OKAY.
I'VE
GOT
YOU.

HURRY!



YOU
SEEM TO
KNOW A
LOT ABOUT
MISTER
ANGRY
THERE.

WHAT'S
THIS
ALL
ABOUT?

OUCH!
HEY! YOU'RE
NOT SUPPOSED
TO HURT ME!
I THOUGHT
YOU WERE A
SUPER
HERO...

WANT TO KNOW MY
SUPER POWER?
I MOVE ENERGY.
NOW THAT MIGHT
NOT SOUND TOO
IMPRESSIVE--
HOW MUCH DO
YOU THINK I CAN
MOVE INTO THIS
CHUNK OF
RUBBLE?



OOPS!
I REALLY
OUGHT TO
PRACTICE
A BIT
MORE.



HOW
MUCH
DO YOU
THINK I
COULD
MOVE INTO
YOUR
HAND?

ALRIGHT! ALRIGHT! HE'S A MILITARY
WEAPON, WEAPON H... THE ARMY WANTED
TO CREATE A TROOP OF UNBEATABLE SOLD-
IERS WITH CONTROLLED AGGRESSION.
IT WAS TO BE AN **ULTIMATE WEAPON**
--- HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE PROTO-
TYPE, BUT ONCE WE'D TRIGGERED HIM
WE COULDN'T SWITCH HIM **OFF**---

ANGER JUST BUILDS UP
INSIDE HIM. THAT'S WHAT
CAUSES THE HEADACHES---

THE ONLY
RELEASE
FOR HIS
RAGE IS
CONSTANTLY
INCREASING
OUTBURSTS
OF VIOLENCE



MISTA
TAFF!

GRRR

YOU STAY
HERE
REBECCA,
NOTHINGS
GOING TO
HURT YOU.

I
PROMISE.



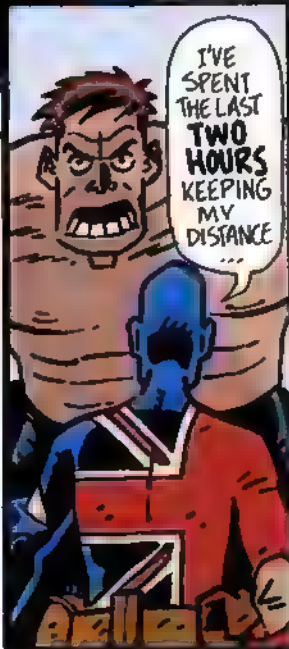
WHAT DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE DOING
NOW?

WHAT I
USUALLY
DO.



SOME
THING
STUPID.

I'VE
SPENT
THE LAST
TWO HOURS
KEEPING
MY DISTANCE



BUT IF
THIS IS
GOING TO
WORK
I NEED
TO GET IN
CLOSE



RAARGH!!

AK!

NOT
QUITE
...
THIS
CLOSE
...





WELL -
I HOPE
YOU'RE
PLEASED
WITH
YOURSELF
PAL
...

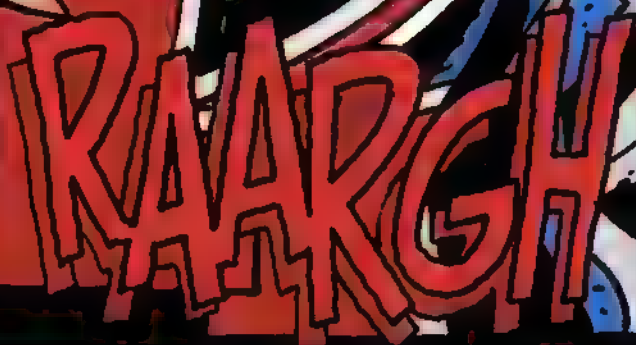


WE COULD HAVE
DEALT WITH THIS,
BUT YOU HAD TO BE
THE BIG **SUPER**
HERO DIDN'T
YOU?

WITHOUT
YOUR CONSTANT
PROVOCATION,
NONE OF THIS
WOULD HAVE
HAPPENED
...



BELIEVE
ME, YOU'VE
GOT A LOT TO
ANSWER
FOR HERE!



GOOD
MORN

FZZT
AND YOU'RE
LISTENING
TO BOB
WAZZOO

SURE.
WHY
WOULDN'T
I BE?

LAST
NIGHT?

TO BE
HONEST
I'M A BIT
FUZZY ON THE
DETAILS, BUT
NO, I FEEL
FINE.

EXCEPT
I'M GETTING
SOME KIND OF
ELECTRICAL
INTERFERENCE
WHENEVER
I TOUCH THE
RADIO

WHY'D
YOU
ASK?



SHOCK was
killing Jack Staff
-but there was
nothing we could
do - SHOCK had
already dealt
with the STRONGEST
of our group -
HAWKES + STAFF

What chance
for any of us
against an
out of control
SUPER
VILLAIN?



HAWKES was
too out of it
to do anything
but STEWART
starts unclipping
his 'POWER
FIST'

'The glove -
it only enhances
your own
strength - on
its own it's
not enough'
HAWKES.



'Don't worry
-I wasn't
planning on
using it on
it's own!'

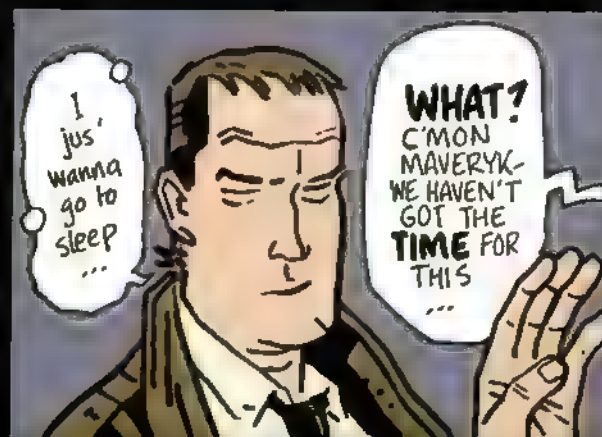
STEWART

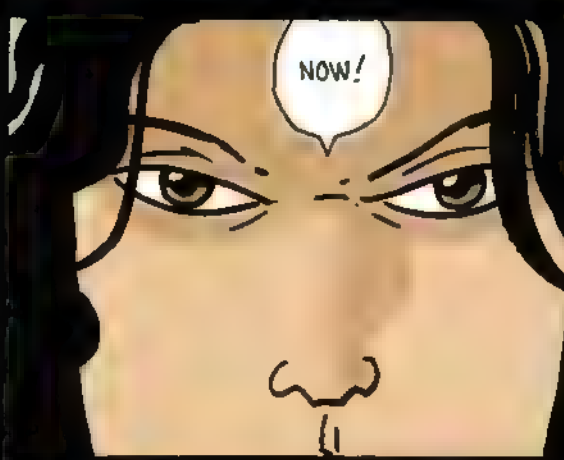
NO
REASON
...

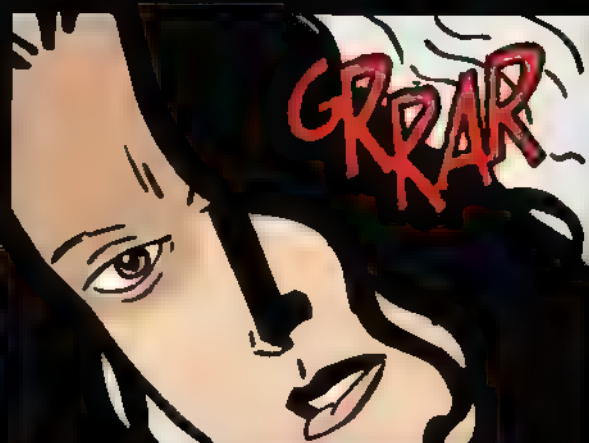
JUST
SOME
THING I
READ.
THAT'S ALL.

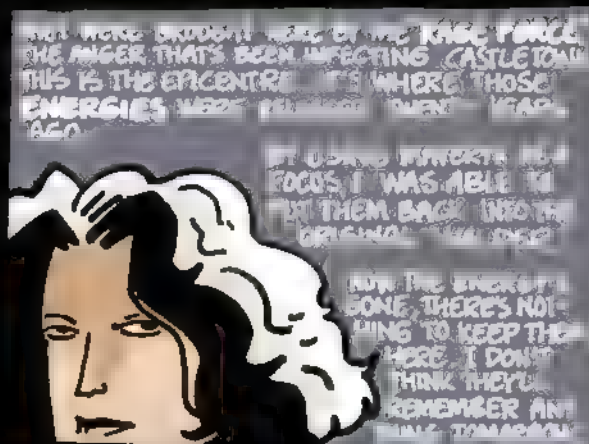
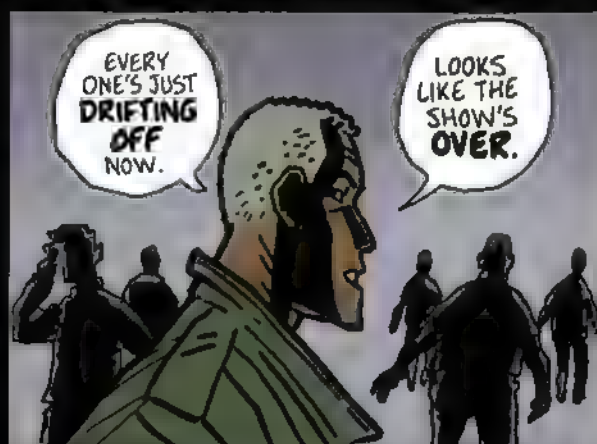
I WAS
WONDERING
IF YOU KNEW
ANYTHING
ABOUT IT.











It was all over
with a single blow -
Stewarts strength
-boosted by the
POWER GLOVE -
Shock
never saw
it coming



In fact, for a
moment, just before
she hit him, there
was a look on
Shocks face like
he didn't know
what was happen-
ing - all the
ANGER was GONE



And there was
something in Com.
Stewart's eyes -
just afterwards
-she turned toward
me and it was
like something
went ON - Or OFF.
I can't remember



Maybe it was a
trick of the light.
Maybe it was
my imagination,
or MAYBE the British
Army finally got
that Ultimate
thingummyjig

maybe
maybe
maybe
Maybe

Wow. I was on one last night.
Even Skinner wouldn't run that
story - and he's got ELVIS
writing a gardening column.



There's a photograph on the fridge.
Me and Mister Bunny.

We were inseperable. My Mum
would tell the story of how I ran
back to rescue him from the car
in the middle of the CASTLETOWN
EARTHQUAKE. That was about
twenty years ago.

I see this picture everyday -
but now its like im looking at
it for the FIRST time.

Me and Mister Bunny.

What happened to Mister Bunny?



THIS IS THE MOMENT.



THIS IS THE MOMENT
JACK STAFF DEFEATED
THE RAGING FURY KNOWN
AS THE HURRICANE.

BLOODY
HELL!

IT
WORKED!



THIS IS THE MOMENT
JACK STAFF SAVED
CASTLE TOWN FROM
TOTAL DESTRUCTION.

IT
REALLY
WORKED!

WHAT?



WHAT
DID YOU
JUST
DO?

BUT THERE'S
NO PLEASING
SOME PEOPLE

HE'S BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!

JACK
STAFF

AT LEAST HE WILL BE FOR THE NEXT
NINETY SECONDS.



ANGER--
RAGE-- IT'S ALL
ENERGY--
JUST TOO MUCH
IN ONE
PLACE.

SO I JUST
DRAINED
IT ALL OUT
OF HIM.

THEN
LET IT GO.
SPREAD
IT OVER
CASTLE
TOWN.

NOW
IT'S LOST
IT'S **FOCUS**,
THAT ANGER
SHOULD
JUST FADE
AWAY.

OKAY,
SO PEOPLE
ARE PROBABLY
GOING TO BE
A BIT MORE
IRRITABLE
TONIGHT

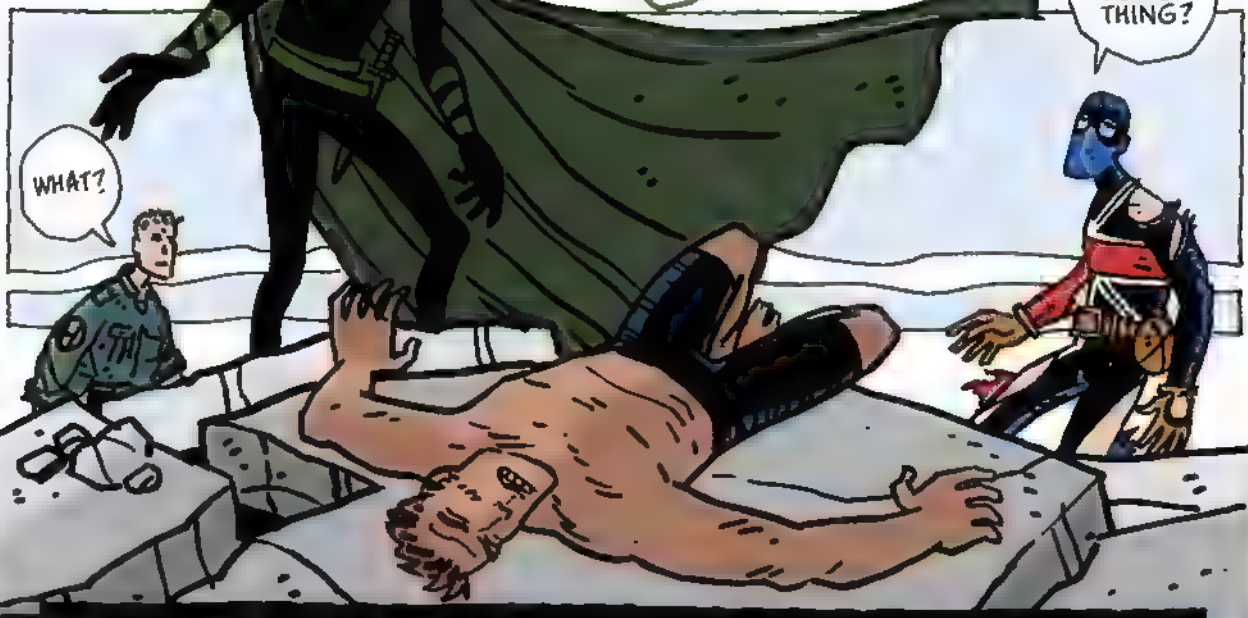
...BUT
THINGS'LL
SOON GET
BACK TO
NORMAL.

NORMAL
FOR CASTLE
TOWN ANY
WAY.

THIS MAN IS
USELESS
TO US
NOW

HE COULD
HAVE BEEN
A VALUABLE
RECRUIT
IN THE WAR

DID I
JUST
MISS
SOME
THING?



WHAT?



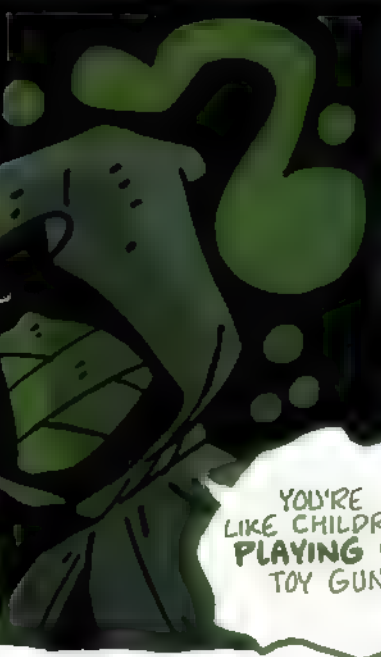
I'LL HAVE YOU
KNOW THAT MAN
IS A MEMBER OF
THE BRITISH
ARMED
FORCES.

THANKS TO
YOU OUR
EFFORTS HERE
HAVE GONE
TO WASTE.



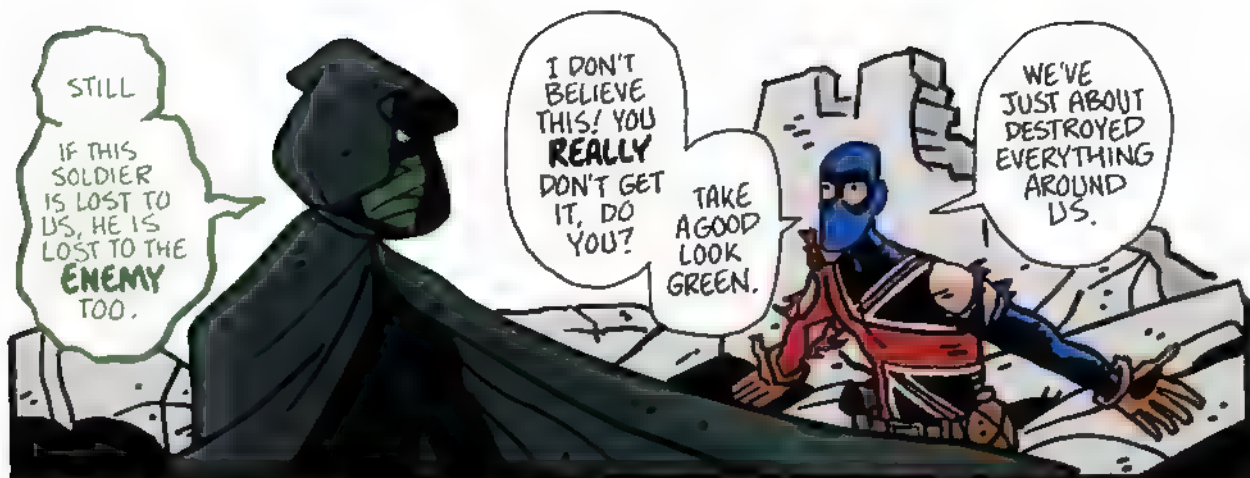
IF THERE'S A WAR
GOING OFF HERE,
HE'S **OUR WEAPON**.

YOU
DON'T
KNOW
WAR.



YOU'RE
LIKE CHILDREN
PLAYING WITH
TOY GUNS.







IT'S ALL ABOUT **FIGHTING** TO YOU, ISN'T IT?

SOME PEOPLE FIGHT BECAUSE THEY **HAVE** TO, TO PROTECT THEMSELVES OR THEIR FAMILIES. SOME PEOPLE FIGHT FOR WHAT THEY **BELIEVE** IN. SOME PEOPLE FIGHT BECAUSE THEY HAVE **NO CHOICE** ...



BUT YOU?

YOU JUST LIKE THE **FIGHT**, DON'T YOU?



I'M NOT FIGHTING YOUR FIGHT ANYMORE.

THE **WAR** HAS GONE ON A LONG TIME

THERE HAS TO BE A CHAMPION.

IF NOT YOU THEN SOME ONE ELSE.

FINE BYME.

CHOOSE SOME ONE ELSE.

I'VE GOT **BETTER THINGS** TO DO WITH MY TIME.



AS YOU **WISH** SOLDIER ...

YOU HAVE MADE **YOUR** CHOICE ...

AND I, I HAVE MADE **MINE**.



STAFF POST

P.O. Box 104, Highbridge, TA9 4WD, England
Danceleph@aol.com

Win an original piece of Jack Staff art! Ever wanted to get hold of an original piece of Jack Staff art featuring a character from your favourite comic? Well here's your chance. For each issue I'm going to be doing a single illustration of a Jack Staff character, which you can win. Great! How? Well there's the catch - all you have to do is write a letter to this letters page! Simple huh? Each issue I will select a Letter of the Month and they will be sent the drawing. All other letters featured in that issue will receive a signed print of the original drawing. All decisions final. No cash alternative. My comic, my rules. Letters don't actually need to be about Jack Staff, though obviously it might help. You can write by e-mail or regular post, just remember to include a mailing address in case you are chosen as the lucky winner. On with the mail

Dear Paul,

I picked up the first Jack Staff TP, Yesterday's Heroes (collecting, I believe, issues 1-4 of the B&W series) this past May and quite enjoyed it. And I have been eagerly awaiting the next collection which just appeared in October's Previews catalog. However, I'm a little confused. It appears that the new collection re-prints those issues plus 5-12. Is this correct? I have to say that I'm a little miffed about having to pay for these issues twice if I want to get the new collection. Can you shed any light on this situation for me? Thanks

Michael Moore
Mmoorewa@earthlink.net

A reasonable question. You're probably not the only miffed person out there. When I was self-publishing Jack Staff, my original plan was to collect the first 12 issues in 3 books, each containing 4 issues. When Image contacted me to see if I would be interested in publishing through them, the first book, if it wasn't printed was certainly in the process of being. I held back on doing any other volumes until Image picked up the reins. When they did we had some discussion as to what to do with the black and white series. Several ideas were mooted including colour collections, but my favourite was the Essential Jack Staff book - a single volume collecting all the 12 issues (though on considerably better quality paper than the Marvel books). This was an option I could not have considered if I was publishing it myself.

Whilst I realise it does seem like you're having to pay twice for something you've already got, by putting everything into a single volume it actually means it's cheaper to buy that book at \$19.95 than it would have been for me to carry on with my original plan and put out two more books selling around \$13 - \$14 each.

You could always just buy the book and tear out the first third if that helps?

Hey Paul

Loved the final B&W Jack Staff. Just got my hands on Burglar Bill #3, but can't find #1 & #2 anywhere in Australia. Do you have any copies for sale? If so, how much including airmail p&h and do you prefer US cash or UK cash?

All the best for 2004.

Dann Lennard,
PO Box A1412,
Sydney South, NSW, 1235,
AUSTRALIA

All the issues of Burglar Bill can be ordered direct from me at Dancing Elephant Press, P.O. Box 104, Highbridge TA9 4WD, England. Single issues are \$5.00 US, £2.25 UK and £3.50 for the rest of the world. Cheques payable to Paul Grist. UK cash is best, but whilst I wouldn't recommend sending cash in the post, if you are doing, please make sure it's securely wrapped - coins taped to the back of a piece of card, that kind of thing.

And you can also order back issues of Jack Staff (both Dancing Elephant and Image) from me at the same address.

Hi Paul

Stuart from the International Superheroes website here. Just a quick query, as I know you are a busy man. There's a lot of speculation on a list I'm on about who Commander Hawke of Unit D might be inspired by (in the manner that Project H is Captain Hurricane, one of Q seems to be the Steel Claw, etc). Obviously he might not be inspired by anyone, but if he is, any chance of revealing who?

Regards

Stuart
lok1@midgaard.demon.co.uk

You mean people are actually worried about this kind of detail? You obviously have far too much time on your hands. The answer is no. But I'm not telling you which part of your question I'm answering.

Dear Paul,

As Jack Staff (which is wonderful by the way!) celebrates all the old IPC/Fleetway heroes in a new way, I wondered if you had heard about the recent re-launch of the original Dan Dare in a new full colour glossy (non-profit) magazine, SPACESHIP AWAY. Unlike previous attempts to bring back Dan Dare, this time it is the original studio team of the 1950s and 60s, Keith Watson and Don Harley, who have illustrated the new story The Phoenix Mission and its sequel Green Nemesis. The magazine also contains features on the background of the series and the artists involved. If you are interested, SPACESHIP AWAY number 1 is available now by mail order from Mr. Rod Barzilay, 8 Marley Close, Preston, Weymouth, Dorset. DT3 6DH

Perhaps you might mention it in your comic?

many thanks and best regards

Steve Law
Lawstephen@hotmail.com

Heya Paul

Just wanted to congratulate you on Ultimate Fantastic Four 1 - narrower page layouts to signify flashbacks - who da thunk?

To end on a bum note, bought Jack Staff 4 and had no idea what was going on, but please don't let that stop you from letting me draw it some time soon

Ed Hillyer
London

Ed Hillyer is the secret identity of Ilya, master cartoonist, whose Skidmarks (I'm still talking comics here) has just been published by Richard Starkings Active Images. This simple tale of one boy and his bike and the girl in the chip shop was first published by Tundra UK back in 1992, and it's still as fresh as when it was first baked. Only \$12.95 from all good comic shops - Buy It Now!

Paul:

Just a quick note to say keep up the great work. Finally got around to reading the first four Image issues of Jack Staff and thought they were amazing. I've always been a big fan of Kane, and I think Jack Staff is just as strong. In both books, you display a wonderful mastery over both story telling and use of blacks. In my humble opinion, you're the best cartoonist working in the field today (followed closely by Terry Moore of SiP fame, and Love Fight's Andi Watson).

I put in an order with my regular supplier, Westfield Comics, for some of the Dancing Elephant Jack Staffs that I'm missing, and for all of the Burglar Bills.

As I led off with, keep up the great work!

Cheers,

Andrew Wahl
PO Box 180
Waterville, WA 98858

Dear Mr. Grist,

Some months back, Dancing Elephant solicited Kane, Vol. 5: The Untouchable Rico Costas, in Previews. I assume it was delayed by the move to Image, but I am curious as to when it will be available. I've been enjoying Kane through the trade paperback collections, and yes, I'm wanting the next one.

If it wasn't for Kane, I may have dismissed Jack Staff altogether. Glad I didn't - that's a great title too. I just picked up the Image trade, Everything Used to be Black and White. I already had Yesterday's Heroes, but since this has twelve issues, instead of four, I was all for it.

One last gushing bit of praise: I hold your works among my favorites, along with Erik Larsen's Savage Dragon, Mike Mignola's Hellboy, and Frank Miller's Martha Washington and Sin City. Your stories are way fun.

Thanks for your time,
C.L. Bishop

At the current schedule I reckon we should be getting to Kane book 5, which will be the first new Kane book in Jan/Feb 2005.

Dear Paul,

I stopped purchasing modern comix at least 10 years ago. Personally I didn't find them interesting enough to spend the ever-increasing cover price for what I started to feel was a lack of good writing and artwork. Fortunately I do have a good friend that does still buy new comix, and I let him filter thru all the new material out there and then occasionally go with his recommendations of what's a decent read.

I'm very glad he loaned me his copy of the Jack Staff: Everything Used to Be Black & White trade paper collection. Being a big fan of silver-age comic characters, this sort of book appealed right to my tastes, with its redos of obvious characters from Marvel & Tower, re-created by your mind into different and interesting scenarios and given just the right twists along the way to make this a very enjoyable series.

It was a welcomed change full of originality and unforgettable players, and, if I did still buy new books, it would certainly be one that I'd pick up on a regular basis. So...thanks for the good time. I read it over three nights after 3 hard days at work. Next time I'm at my local comic book shop, I think I'll pick up a copy for my own collection; never can tell. I just might want to read this again.

Regards,

D.Puck
dpuck@scrtc.com

Jack Staff - the comic that people would buy if they still bought comics!

Here's one that came through the Jack Staff message board at www.imagecomics.com

First off Paul I just want to say that you have done yet another fabulous issue of this series. Jack Staff is always on my To Buy List whenever I get to see a new issue come out. The cover is certainly one of the best of the year (also a new personal favorite) and really harkens back to the old Marvel covers. The story is heading into its climax which I'm really eager to see. However I have a few questions about the issue and few for some of its characters

1) I take it that Shock has become, to paraphrase 28 Days Later, infected with Rage?

2) The Claw, worn by that other guy in Q who isn't Harry Morgan and whose name escapes me, a reference to the villain Dr. Claw (which the glove looks suspiciously like) from the American children's cartoon Inspector Gadget? Or am I reaching here with this reference and its to some British character I wouldn't know about because I'm a Yank?

3) Is Commander Stewart the same person as Colonel Stewart?

4) When exactly is the present of Jack Staff because if I'm not mistaken the past in this story takes place in 1975 which was 20 years ago correct? I keep thinking that it's 1995 or 96 since Becky in the first issue of the Dancing Elephant series says that when Jack was last seen. Please clear this up for me if you can because I have confused myself I think.

5) Around when do you think will you be able to get Jack Staff #5 comes out?

6) Will the upcoming Jack Staff collection of the original series be in black and white or the glorious technicolor of Phil Elliot (who I feel has become an integral element of the comic)?

Once again, you and Phil pulled off magic with this issue. Thanks for entertaining me at least until the next Jack Staff or Kane comes out.

Dan Morris

1. Yes.

2. Obscure British reference I'm afraid.

3. Yes

4. Present day is present day. When Becky Burdock mentions 1975 in the first issue it's to say something like Maybe the Jack Staff of 1940 isn't the same as the one in 1975 it was just meant to show two different time periods, I didn't mean to imply that was the last time Jack Staff was seen.

6 Black and white. There are some colour pieces in some of the issues (1, 8 and 12) but it's just not practical to include these in the collected book. Think of them as an extra bonus for buying the comic in the first place.

And the winner is

Mr D. Puck wins this issue's Jack Staff picture. Thanks to everyone who's taken the time to write. See you next time!

First thing, I'd like to welcome the most recent addition to the Paul Grist Universe, Nathaniel Arthur Dylan Benedict Burridge-Grist. He was born on the 8th January 2004 at 7.00 pm, weighing in at seven and a half pounds.



FLAG WAVING

WRITE TO
STAFF POST
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ENGLAND

Danceleph@aol.com

Check out the
Jack Staff Message Board
at www.imagecomics.com

NEXT ISSUE



Bramble and Son, Vampire Hunters, return in
another issue of the Comic
Journal's favourite Super Hero comic!

And it's goodbye to Cerebus, which reached it's 300th (and final) issue in March of this year. Cerebus is probably the comic that has had the biggest influence on my life. I picked up my first copy (issue 39) from Oddessy 7 in Manchester back in the Autumn of 1982. I read the issue that night and then went back to the shop the following day to buy all the other issues they had in stock. Cerebus was the comic that made me want to do my own comic and made me think that self publishing was a Very Good Thing. So much so that when I eventually did launch my own self published comic, Kane, the stories were set in the 39th precinct of New Eden.

I really don't think people realise how much Dave Sim actually changed the way things are done in comics. Cerebus was the first comic (as far as I know) that collected single issues into trade paperbacks as a way of keeping all the issues in print. A lot of other people producing their own comics are only there because Dave Sim showed that self publishing was not a vanity option, but a practical viable way for a creator to get their work out to their readers. Okay, so there's been an awful lot of rubbish produced in the name of self publishing over the last 20 years, that's not Dave's fault - but there's a lot of good stuff out there that wouldn't be there if Cerebus hadn't shown it was possible. I first saw Jim Valentino's work in the back of Cerebus. Without Cerebus there probably wouldn't be Bone. Or Strangers in Paradise. It's probably not stretching the point to say there wouldn't even be an Image.

And I haven't even begun to talk about the story itself, a Conan parody which soon became a very individual vision. I'm really not a critic so I'm probably not the best person to write commentary on the story - all I can do is recommend that you try it for yourself. It's regarded as being a bit 'controversial' and 'difficult' in recent years - so why not try one of the earlier funnier books? High Society (covering issues 25 to 50) is probably a good place to start - but then I like the Marx Brothers more than the Three Stooges. The writings great, sharp, funny - and the arts great too - and when Gerhard comes in half way through the Church and State collection...

What can I say? After 300 issues Dave Sim has left the building.

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My father hunted vampires before me. My children will hunt vampires after I am gone.

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& SON**
VAMPIRE HUNTERS

The family curse.



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